# Fellowship in Prayer

"For a world united in prayer"

Lord of the flowering moment,
Instruct my spirit how,
In Life's soon over summer,
To reap the here and now.

— A. E. Johnson.

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## OUR PURPOSE

"To promote the practice of prayer among *all* religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind."

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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## THERE LIES OUR WHOLE VOCATION...

*Poor brother, who thinks he is forgotten and is not forgotten at all, but who himself forgets that the memory that lies in the heart cannot always express itself outwardly, and that the number of unexpressed things far exceeds those that are expressed.*

*The Carthusian life rests upon a deep foundation of silence which you know and love, and it is in that depth that the Eternal Word is born for each of us. There lies our whole vocation: to listen to Him Who generates the Word and to live thereby. The Word proceeds from Silence, and we strive to find Him in His Source. This is because the Silence here in question is not a void nor a negation but, on the contrary, Being at Its fullest and most fruitful plenitude. That is why It generates; and that is why we keep silent.*

*I read somewhere that books are of more value for what they do not say than for what they do. The reader is like a man gazing at an horizon. Beyond the outlines that he sees, he seeks perspectives he barely discerns, but which draw him precisely because of the mystery he senses in them. So the books one loves are those which make one think. One seeks in them that silence whence the words were born, which is those depths of the soul which no language can express, for they are beyond expression. It is here we touch what is measureless, eternal and divine in us.*

— By an anonymous Carthusian monk
in THEY SPEAK BY SILENCES
Longmans, Green & Co., New York

## WAYS OF WORSHIPING GOD

Many are the ways to worship God, as many as there are people to worship Him. He is the great magnet luring us all. Whether we know it or not, all of us are being drawn to him constantly. Even when we seem to flee Him, it is like the lover's flight from the beloved, to whom he must return. From the primitive in his forest bowing before a stone idol, to the saint absorbed in deep contemplation of the God of Love, we are all seeking Him. We cannot help ourselves.

We look for Him in churches, or in books, or at shrines and places of pilgrimage, or in Nature, or in holy association, but in the end we seek him in the recesses of our own souls. For He has taken his abode in our hearts, and though He is everywhere He dwells in the soul of man more than anywhere else. The whole world is his mansion, but the heart of his devotee is his drawing room. That is where the master of the house can most easily be found.

Many scorn the worship of idols and images. They declare that God is Spirit and therefore all idol-worship, all use of images, is superstition and idolatry and cannot lead anyone to God. But can the man who depends on idols and stone images lose himself in contemplation of the Divine Spirit that pervades all the worlds? Because his stage of spiritual evolution is rudimentary, idols and images are absolutely necessary to him. And why should they not be? The mother of many children does not feed each with the same kind of food; neither does God require the same kinds of worship from all of his children.

Besides, do we really believe the man who prostrates before a stone idol is worshiping the idol itself? Surely he is not. In his own fashion it is the Invisible God that he invokes, not the idol; and he worships Him just as much as the yogi or the saint who commune with Him as spirit to Spirit. All worship the same Reality, we cannot do otherwise; for that Reality is the substance of our beings. Only the forms and methods we use in approaching it are different.

We must remember that Christ's command to worship God 'in spirit and in truth' was hardly meant for anyone not yet

pure and evolved enough to forget himself completely—mind, body and personality—in the act of meditation. Who can really do this, besides the saint? And who besides the saint can understand what 'in spirit and in truth' really means? Christ's statement must be taken as a description of the ideal to which, sooner or later, each of us will come. Until then we worship as best we can. We repeat his Name, sing His glories, pray and meditate, humble ourselves in selfless adoration, ask Him for devotion and for faith and the will to seek Him in all things, and venerate the holy. Any of these, or all of them, will bring us closer to Him, will purify our minds, and will cause the indwelling Spirit to shine out upon the field of our lives with greater and greater radiance and power.

In the meantime the use of images is recommended by the masters of prayer as the best means to control our minds and direct the current of our emotions toward the Lord. Without them we find it difficult to focus our thoughts during meditation. God is all about us, we know, and yet in deep prayer we often discover that it is hard to reach Him unless we give our minds something to hold unto. We neglect these symbols and images at our own loss. Upon analysis, indeed, our repudiation of them is highly presumptuous: it suggests that our minds are already of such purity and concentration that we can contact the Infinite Spirit directly, without recourse to any aids whatever.

The truest image of all is man himself. Few of us yet can spend long hours each day in meditation, but all of us can pray for the humility to see the divine in our fellow man and to serve him as the veritable embodiment of the Lord; to ignore the appearance he may show to the world and to dwell upon the Reality behind the appearance; to see the potential saint struggling to be born in every sinner and the imprisoned Christ fighting for life in everyone. There is no higher worship than this. Progress here will endow us with a strength we do not dream of, will fill us with a sense of the oneness of existence, and as nothing else will take us to the Lord himself. The whole world is only a manifestation of Him and by worshiping the divine in our fellow man and serving him as though we were serving the Lord as man, we will be literally worshiping Him alone. « « »

# A MOMENT OF TRUTH

*Dawn Edwards*

*(The following vivid account of a spiritual experience occurs in Miss Edwards' JOURNEY INTO CONSCIOUSNESS, reviewed in this issue.)*

The author had her first direct experience of truth of the Infinite when she was eighteen. Aldous Huxley is quite right that 'cosmic consciousness' can come to the unregenerate, for she had neither read nor discussed the philosophers nor seers, knew nothing of science nor astronomy and had undergone no disciplines of purification, at least not in this life.

As background these few facts might be noted: she was brought up in a Mormon home, replete with all admonishments of sin, heaven and hell; she had been taught that God was like man with passions and parts, and that man was fashioned after Him. God was someone omniscient who sat up in the sky and could see everything. As to personal characteristics, the author had always been motherly and helpful, considered living merely for self or pleasure utterly meaningless and in fact ridiculous, had always been cheerful by nature, poetic, and though externally friendly and extroverted, was when alone contemplative. For a time prior to her experience she was unceasingly under all activity, very busy with such thoughts as Who am I? Who is God? What is life for? and so on.

This culminated one evening in an intense desire to *know*. She went out along a country road, praying very earnestly and passionately, asking if there was meaning or purpose to life. If life was only being born, married, having children, struggling only to be buried on the hill, striving then was a joke. If a mountain of gold coins had been placed beside her at that time, it could not have distracted her; for were there no meaning to life, of what use was money? She felt she must have an answer or die on the spot.

Quite suddenly, as in a rosy cloud, she was caught up into the heavens, and saw the awesome sight of the constellations, all wheeling and turning—(she could hear this too)—in their places. Many suns, many constellations. And *all was purpose, order and plan!* No confusion, no chaos—but harmony. She saw instantaneously that *the real self is eternal*—cannot be stabbed, shot, hurt nor obliter-

ated; *that life is eternal.* Also that there was *no sin,* that sex is unnecessary. She saw that God *is everywhere and in everything*—in a rock, a tree, as in a man. She was a part of all, yet apart from all. Death was experienced—"the peace that passeth understanding," and it was pure bliss, bliss, bliss. All the surfaces we consider important just sloughed off, as a snake sheds its skin. Senses? Yes, the pure essence of them was intact—she could hear, see and think. But what rest and joy! This was a shining, golden sea of peace, the ocean of Soul, so alive, so blissful. This should be called life, and life death. God was that ocean, He was everywhere and in everything--but he was more, much more. On the horizon hovered a white luminous cloud in which was God—but she knew if that were removed, there would be another cloud, and another. A power, a greater light, and a Greater Light, that hung beyond and above this peaceful ocean of twilit joy.

And the rhythm—the great undulating rhythm! There were other things learned—she learned more in those few seconds or minutes than in all the years before, or many to come, while the experience was assimilated. The immediate effect of the experience was, other than joy, an extension of all the senses. She could not doubt she had seen the Truth—if she had not, then she was not breathing, had no existence. It sounds quite cruel, but had the ground opened up and swallowed everyone she knew, had she found herself crippled or blind, there would have been nothing to grieve about. This life, she saw, was but an eyelash blink in Time. Physically, too, it was as though the blood had turned to pure joy—the solid body turns to liquid—flows; and the breath 'takes over' and bears one along. The return to 'life' was awful—as though she had been gloriously alive, and now waked up dead, stopped. But she had the vision to carry on with her, to light the way....

She might not attain the necessary discipline or control necessary to live in this level, but it could never be doubted that she had caught the reflection of the Infinite. Might she be able to urge others to taste a drop of this blissful elixir? No matter what would ever seem to happen to her in a personal way, beneath the waves of emotion was the Truth all would merge into, and on which even now and forever all are sustained. *****

## THE PRAYER GROUP IS EFFECTIVE

*Mildred Long*

Prayer groups are growing in favor among earnest seekers for God. A small group meeting weekly for the sole purpose of spiritual growth and intercessory prayer approximates in our day the spirit of the early Christian Church. These groups may be an indication of a spiritual awakening and a deep yearning for a more vital faith in God. They may easily be the power that holds our world together.

We come together—a few of us—in the home of a devoted child of God who is our leader. She has taught us to come in quietly with little conversation. We sit in quiet meditation. With a few well chosen words she begins the lesson: "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him." "Keep silence. Let earth and air be still. Let every fluctuation of mind cease that the mind may be stayed on God. Let every trouble, heartache, and problem take wings and fly away that the heart may be at rest.

"For the Lord is in His holy temple and that temple is my heart. I give Him room; I sit in His presence and listen to His voice. I wait before Him and I keep silence that He may speak."

And so we are brought into the very presence of God. Yes, more than that, God takes up His residence within us in a new way, with a fuller understanding on our part of the meaning of His Presence.

The meditation continues always on a topic vital to our needs and our daily living. The fruits of the Spirit, the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, the Beatitudes, the solution of various emotional problems—all these and many more we have studied together.

Sometimes we have each taken a turn in leading the devotional period, but we like best to trust this to our leader.

Then comes the prayer time. Sometimes we pray first for ourselves and our special needs. Then we pray for the absent members of the group and their special needs, also for all the husbands and children in all our families.

We pray for those special requests that come to us over the telephone, from the church office, from other individuals; for the sick and afflicted; for the ongoing of the Kingdom through the local churches; for the nations,

their leaders and people; for our own nation and its spiritual awakening; for men of prayer and faith to be raised up as leaders.

Often we close with the thought that we are a part of a great host of praying people meeting at this hour around the world. And we visualize a golden cord by which we hold the entire world up to God for His blessing.

Prayers are brief and direct, not telling God all the details of a situation, not dictating what the answer should be. "May Thy perfect will be done in John," "May Mary be made whole in body, mind, and spirit," are typical requests.

All information about individuals is held in strict confidence, lest we fall into the temptation of gossiping and thus destroy confidence in our sincerity of purpose.

We leave quietly. Sometimes the presence of the Spirit has been so vital we leave in complete silence, not wishing to dissipate the power by idle talk. We leave in peace. For one hour the world has receded, troubles have vanished, and we have feasted our souls on Divine provision. We are rested, refreshed, renewed in spirit. And the day's work is more easily accomplished.

We have seen homes transformed because Mother took time to attend the prayer group regularly. Mother was changed and became peaceful and trusting by learning to practice the presence of God. The rest of the family caught her spirit.

If the world is to be transformed, the process must begin with the individual. When we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," our prayer must mean, Thy Kingdom come in me today and now, to remain. The prayer group centers on this one goal. And being one-pointed, it becomes effective. » » » »

*You cannot run away from a weakness.*
*You must some time fight it out, or perish.*
*And if so, why not now, and where you stand?*

— *R. L. Stevenson.*

## TURNING TO THE LORD

*Henry Thomas Hamblin*

One of our greatest problems at first is how to overcome inertia. To get going in the new Life of the Spirit is not easy. We find it so difficult to reverse all our thoughts, change our actions and cultivate an entirely new outlook on life. Old habits of thought and action are so deeply ingrained in us that they still persist, in spite of all our efforts.

In order to get going, and to keep going in the right direction, considerable concentration is required. The task may seem too great for us at first. But if we can but overcome inertia, and get under way, a new factor begins to come into operation—and this is Momentum.

First of all, however, let me say that in order to make any progress at all in the New Life of Attainment and Liberation it is necessary for us to make a practice, and form a habit, of turning to our Divine Source—God. Victory comes through turning to God and cultivating a higher consciousness, and not through fighting our troubles and weaknesses.

When we turn to the One Supreme Spiritual Lord of Life, and if we persevere in staying our mind, thought and affection upon Him, certain things happen. When we turn to the One Supreme Lord all the Divine Forces hasten to minister to us. When we turn to the One Omnipotent Power great spiritual potencies are set in motion to work on our behalf. Day by day these Divine powers and potencies work for our good, and also they carry on their activities while we are asleep....

Without this cooperation from Divine Sources we should never be able to make any progress at all, for we have not only to overcome inertia, but there is also a certain amount of negative momentum to be overcome. But because it is negative it can be overcome and is overcome automatically, if we persevere in turning to our Divine Source...

This negative momentum, although not being of God, and consequently without any Divine power behind it, is yet too powerful for us to overcome. Also, it is not possible to overcome anything negative by fighting it. But it can be, and is, overcome by Divine Grace, as a result of our turning to the Lord.

By turning to God and by finding God's Peace there is

built up a new Momentum Godwards which will persist and increase through eternity...

If we stay our mind upon God, surrender ourselves entirely to Him, and throw ourselves upon Him, and if we give ourselves devotedly to the living of the life of the Spirit and in service to humanity, then there is built up a momentum that will keep us going in the right direction even when we ourselves may fail, and also during those times when we seem unable to help ourselves or even to pray aright.

This Divine momentum gathers strength with the years. Also, every time that we turn to the Lord something is added to it. Every true desire, every noble thought, every selfless action, also adds something to this Divine momentum, which leaves sin and failure behind and pushes us along to our highest good, our greatest joy and the perfect Bliss of Divine union.

A business man who puts his business before everything else becomes a slave to his business. A professional man who puts his profession and a lust for fame before everything else becomes a slave to his ambition. But one who puts God before everything else becomes a slave of the Lord, Who is the object of his love. This is the object of all true lovers—to be a slave to the object of his devotion. It is the goal of all true seekers of God—to be a slave of the Lord...

If we grow slack, or allow ourselves to become too complacent, or if we desire ease and contentment more than we do the attainment to a state of Divine bliss, then Divine Momentum (built up by previous striving, but which is really Divine grace working on our behalf) may bring about a series of experiences which will compel our attention to Divine things and awaken us to the fact that we have fallen back, and have not been seeking God with our whole heart and mind and strength. Therefore we do not look upon difficult experiences as evil, for we see in them a Divine Momentum urging us onward to our highest good and to God's eternal joy. Thus are we progressed by what appears to be life's greatest hindrances.

Behind every incident of our life divine Love and Wisdom work incessantly on our behalf. Let us therefore submit ourselves entirely to the Divine will, and thus lose all fear as to what is going to happen to us.

— *The Quest*
In MIRA.

# THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER

*Mark Halpern*

In the cultural history of the human race there have always been men of great learning, individuals with a profound knowledge of literature and the sciences. We call such erudite persons, savants or scholars. But we reserve the higher title of philosopher for those who are not merely interested in the pursuit of knowledge as such, but who have an unquenchable hunger for the highest wisdom of life. Indeed, the very word *philosophy* means love of wisdom.

And yet, through deeper insight, it is evident that the true significance of the name *philosopher* has a divine connotation, which transcends even the noble calling of the search for wisdom. The true philosopher, in the deepest sense of the word, is the person who has incorporated in himself the distilled essence of dire experiences and philosophic studies, until he has become the serene and illuminating embodiment of divine wisdom.

A man may have devoted an entire lifetime to the study of the philosophies of all ages and lands; he may have pondered and meditated all those years on the riddle of the universe, and on the various categories and processes of human consciousness. But if he still has not found the serene perspective of the eternal infinite—if he still loses his temper—he is not yet worthy of the name *philosopher.*

Three outstanding examples of the true philosopher are Epictetus, Socrates, and Jesus of Nazareth. Epictetus, a chained slave, was able to live the same serene philosophic life that would have been his under the more favorable circumstances of a free man. Socrates, continually harassed by a shrewish wife, hounded by the authorities for teaching the youth of Athens how to find the Light of Wisdom within themselves, maintained his perfect serenity to the very end, when he chose the cup of poison, rather than be exiled in his old age to a distant land.

And Jesus of Nazareth, the Divine Philosopher who made an imperishable epic poem of the Pure Wisdom he had discovered in the profoundest sanctuary of his own being—in the Kingdom of Heaven within—the same kingdom that can be found within each and every human being, regardless of race, creed, color, or

present low status of spiritual evolution...

Yes, the gentle Nazarene, a supreme example of what a true philosopher should be. Not even the anguish and agony of the ordeal on the cross could break the serene rhythm of his mastery and perfect equilibrium—the fruits of his compassionate understanding and wisdom. Thus it was that his lips could give utterance, with almost his last breath, to the godly benediction of philosophic beauty:

"Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do..."

And so, if we would follow in the path of the Divine Philosopher, let our prayers, like those of the wise Solomon, be for understanding and wisdom, and perhaps we, too, shall hear the answer from above:

"Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

"Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart...."

*(I Kings 3:11-12)*

*BARABBAS*

*How pale he is, death's chrism on his brow.*
*My blood runs cold and yet he cries not out.*
*Can he not save himself this hour...now?*
*Is this his way—no railing and no doubt?*
*I wish my life had been like his, unstained*
*With evil, had I but walked his path instead.*
*Is it too late for me? Lord, hear my plea.*
*Take me into that promised paradise.*
*He speaks so kind—"This day shalt thou be with me."*
*I see a new world there within his eyes.*
*The crosses stab the stark and lonely sky,*
*And two free souls released are lifted high.*

— Zelma S. Dennis.

# THE DIVINE PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

*Dr. W. J. Thompson*

In John 18, 37 we read these words of Jesus as He stood before Pilate: "To This End Was I Born, and for This Cause Came I Into the World, That I Should...."

I have left the statement unfinished in order to help you consider your own mission in life.

It is interesting to note how often men and women who have accomplished great things have felt the sense of divine compulsion and direction in their lives. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world!" With such a conviction, life takes on new significance and new splendor.

When there is no definite objective, life becomes uncertain and confused. One evening a young American started to walk to a nearby town to see if there was any opportunity for the practice of law, for which he had just been licensed. He was wondering about his mission in life as he walked along. While watching the sun set, suddenly he observed a bird moving on steady wing until it disappeared in the distance. In that sight came new hope and inspiration. That night he sat down and wrote these opening words of a poem, *To A Water-Fowl:*

*He who from zone to zone*
*Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,*
*In the long way that I must tread alone,*
*Will lead my steps aright...*

William Cullen Bryant awakened to the thrilling fact that he had a divine guide, and that knowledge gave a wonderful meaning to his life. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should fulfill the plan of my life!"

It has been said that there are three great periods in a human life. One, when we are born; another, when we pass into the unseen; and midway between these two, the glorious experience of knowing God's plan for us, and cooperating with Him to work out that plan.

Frances Willard put her desire into these words: "I fully purposed to be one whom the multitudes would love and lean on, and bless—not out of egotism, but out of a great longing to fulfill God's plan for me. Lying flat on the prairie grass, and lifting my hands toward the sky, I cried—'What is it I am to be, O God?

Oh, help me to be what you would have me be!' I felt that a woman owed it to others to live as bravely, as helpfully, as gloriously as she could, and to let the world know it."

This feeling of a direct commission from God actually transforms life, and makes it shine with divine significance. And with this feeling comes the thrilling awareness that he who gave the commission is also with us to give the needed guidance and grace that will enable us to carry out His divine plan for our individual life.

This sense of a divine plan for us, coupled with the fact of God's companionship, not only gives direction to our every day living, but also provides the answer to the problems we meet. One writes to me: "I do not know why God permits this or that to happen, but I know Him, and that is more than sufficient. He does not leave me to struggle along in my own puny strength. He has promised to go with me all the way, and he keeps His word. His love, His wisdom, His power, are united to guide and guard me on this wonderful adventure of life; and His divine presence is the convincing solution of my problems."

In the life story of Dr. R. F. Horton, of London, I find this passage: "Looking back through the years, I am impressed with this one conviction that a life committed absolutely to God is led in a way that may seem mysterious, but a way that proves to be His wonderful way. No matter what appearances may suggest, we discover that divine guidance is a definite fact in human experience."

"God has a special mission for you." said John Ruskin, "No one can do that work for me which I have come into the world to do. He may do a greater work, but he cannot do my work, any more than I can hand over my responsibilities or my gifts. I must do my own special life-work with these hands or these lips which God has given me. And by doing my own work, poor as it may seem, I thus fulfill God's plan for me and glorify His name."

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should..." When you can finish this sentence as it applies to you personally, then you will know the glorious meaning of life!

* * *

*We cannot change anything unless we accept it.*

— Carl Jung.

## FROM THE U

*(Selections from India's*

At whose behest does the mind think? Who bids the body live? Who makes the tongue speak?...What is that by knowing which, all else can be known?

The Self is the omniscient Lord. He is not born. He does not die. He is neither cause nor effect. This Ancient One is unborn, imperishable, eternal: though the body be destroyed, he is not killed.

If the slayer think that he slays, if the slain think that he is slain, neither of them knows the truth. The Self slays not, nor is he slain.

Smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest, this Self forever dwells within the hearts of all. When a man is free from desire, his mind and senses purified, he beholds the glory of the Self and is without sorrow.

Though seated, he travels far; though at rest, he moves all things. Who but the purest of the pure can realize this Effulgent Being, who is joy and who is beyond joy.

Formless is he, though inhabiting form. In the midst of the fleeting he abides forever. All-pervading and supreme is the Self. The wise man, knowing him in his true nature, transcends all grief.

The Self is not known through study of the scriptures, nor through subtlety of the intellect, nor through much learning; but by him who longs for him is he known....

The Self-Existent made the senses turn outward. Accordingly, man looks toward what is without, and sees not what is within. Rare is he who, longing for immortality, shuts his eyes to what is without and beholds the Self.

Fools follow the desires of the flesh and fall into the snare of all-encompassing death; but the wise, knowing the Self as eternal, seek not the things that pass away...

The good is one thing; the pleasant is another. These two, differing in their ends, both prompt to action. Blessed are they that choose the good; they that choose the pleasant miss the goal.

## UPANISHADS

*'s celebrated scriptures)*

Both the good and the pleasant present themselves to men. The wise, having examined both, distinguish the one from the other. The wise prefer the good to the pleasant; the foolish, driven by fleshly desires, prefer the pleasant to the good.

Living in the abyss of ignorance yet wise in their own conceit, deluded fools go round and round, the blind led by the blind.

To the thoughtless youth, deceived by the vanity of earthly possessions, the path that leads to the eternal abode is not revealed. *This world alone is real; there is no hereafter*—thinking thus, he falls again and again, birth after birth, into the jaws of death....

What is within us is also without. What is without is also within. He who sees difference between what is within and what is without goes evermore from death to death.,,

By the purified mind alone is the indivisible Brahman to be attained. Brahman alone is—nothing else is. He who sees the manifold universe, and not the one reality, goes evermore from death to death.,,

This vast universe is a wheel. Upon it are all creatures that are subject to birth, death, and rebirth. Round and round it turns, and never stops. It is the wheel of Brahman. As long as the individual self thinks it is separate from Brahman, it revolves upon the wheel in bondage to the laws of birth, death, and rebirth. But when through the grace of Brahman it realizes its identity with him, it revolves upon the wheel no longer. It achieves immortality.,,

He who sees all beings in the Self, and the Self in all beings, hates none. To the illumined soul, the Self is all. For him who sees everywhere oneness, how can there be delusion or grief?

The truth is that you are always united with the Lord. But you must *know* this. Nothing further is there to know.

## DESTINY AND SUFFERING

*Francis Merchant*

When the foundations of the world were established, polar opposites were a necessary and unavoidable concomitant. Light and darkness, good and evil, spirit and matter, truth and falsehood, great and small—in short, all polar opposites flow from the very act of creating the world. Heraclitus understood this when he wrote: "The harmonious structure of the world depends upon opposite tension." All change, growth and development is predicated on the existence of these contrary forces. "God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, satiety and hunger." It is part of our life-task to seek the unity that lies beyond the contraries....

Everything that happens to us, Heraclitus asserts, is fateful, rational, and just. This terse statement is pregnant with meaning. It assures us that we live in a meaningful universe. The part man plays upon the stage of life is not purposeless; he is an actor in the ordered drama of the universe, an instrument in the working out of the divine intention.,,

Accepting the postulate that this is a purposive world, it follows that a plan exists. To grasp the nature of that plan, and to cooperate in carrying it out is man's destiny. The obstacles that he confronts as he undertakes this task are called evil; in a larger sense they represent elements that must be transformed and transmuted in the working out of the plan. Evil is thus conceived to be the force that opposes evolutionary intent; it is the shadow that falls between the vision and actuality.

Death, disease, war, catastrophe—all are ministers of evolutionary justice. To understand their uses is to take a long step in overcoming them. When this is accomplished, the striver can echo the truth that Shakespeare enunciated, "Sweet are the uses of adversity which, like the toad, ugly and venomous, wears yet a jewel in his crown."

If it is conceded that plants, animals, and planets are subject to laws, it would seem logical to suppose that man is no exception. We know, of course, that he is conditioned by the fundamental experiences of birth, old age, and death. The teaching given by Mrs. Alice A. Bailey asserts that the circumstances

confronting him in the course of a lifetime are the precipitated result of his own thought.

The equilibrizing agency that determines a man's experience, we are told, is karma.* The apparent evil that any given individual must face should not be considered as punishment, but rather as a means of restoring the equilibrium of harmony. In a sense, karma is the equilibrizing energy that keeps a man in tune with the ordained plan. It should astonish no one that the task of helping a man part with his ignorance sometimes requires sharp reverses of fortune and a few hammer blows of catastrophe.

Plotinus once recommended that each individual study himself carefully to discover in which ways he deviates from his ideal of perfection; having ascertained wherein he falls short, he should imagine himself to be a sculptor, and chisel away a bit here and a bit there until the perfect representation of his ideal becomes manifest. In this process karma supplies the chisel. Pain may accompany the chiseling, but the end-result is the creation of a nobler being.

This law of justice is implied in the biblical statement that the very hairs of a man's head are numbered. If this be so, it follows that the vast cosmos with all that it contains is governed by karma. To know this is to walk beneath the stars with a greater sense of assurance, a conviction that the wise ordering of our lives is of greater importance than the accumulation of material possessions, that we are part of the magnificent universe about us, and have a role to play in the intricate scheme of things....

The earthly pilgrimage of man is attended by mysteries. Whether human existence is but an arc in a greater circle of being, or a straight-line that begins with birth and irrevocably terminates with death is still a matter for dispute. If man outlives the body, what is the nature of his existence when divested of his corporeality? If death spells the end of all, why is man assigned such an excruciating role in the scheme of things?....

Plato believed that the soul exists before birth and lives on after death. Pytha-

*Karma: The Oriental concept of cause and effect, applied to thought, word and action; reflected in St. Paul's saying: "As a man sows, so shall he also reap." (Ed. Note)

goras is said to have remembered his previous incarnations. Jesus was asked whether he was a reincarnation of Elijah. The Hindus have always held that men return to this earthly classroom again and again until the lessons of this plane have been mastered. Theosophy has placed great emphasis on this doctrine....

Men have chosen experiences that would develop but one side of their natures. Everything relating to pleasure has been welcomed, and everything pertaining to pain rejected. The result can only be unbalanced individuals. The attempt to exclude all painful experiences yields a personality that is inadequately equipped to cope with reality.

A new attitude should be cultivated. We have as much to learn from pain as from pleasure. Neither should be avoided, for both are our teachers. In fact, the afflictions that come upon us may chisel out new areas of understanding in the mind. Suffering has been known to purify persons who could not be helped in any other way. As a poet once expressed it, sorrows come to stretch out spaces in the heart for joy.

Pain is an enlightener. It is the centripetal force that projects a man inward, that liberates him from the dominance of form, and drives him to the radiance of life. As a shaping power, it breaks crystallized molds and allows the imprisoned splendor to escape.

To tune a violin, the springs must be tautened and tensed so that the full beauty of the melody may sound forth in harmony. A similar tension in life is necessary to attune the personality to the soul.

Pain may thus be conceived as the divine chisel that hews the lumpish rock of human nature into a shape that is more expressive of the divine will...

Considered from this point of view, pain is a blessing rather than a curse; a friend, not an enemy. Adopting this attitude, we seek to learn the meaning of pain instead of fleeing precipitately from its touch.... Understanding pain, then, is far more important than avoiding it. If we refuse to look it in the face, we shall find that it will come upon us stealthily, and waylay us at an unexpected moment. On the other hand, if we confront it courageously, its aspect changes and we catch a glimpse of the brightness that lies behind its death mask.

— *From THE GOLDEN HOARD.*

## MOTHERHOOD

*Harry Halsey Starrett*

Motherhood is the most profound and comprehensive Reality in the physical universe. Without Motherhood there would be no life on this planet.

Motherhood on this earth is the representation of the Great World Motherhood through which all things came into being and which keeps all things moving. A human mother is the earthly counterpart of the Mother Aspect of the Godhead—The Love Aspect.

Motherhood is a Divine privilege but with it goes great responsibility and immeasurable sacrifice and suffering.

Motherhood is the heart and soul of the home as the home is the heart and soul of the nation and of the world.

It is indeed lamentable that man takes Motherhood for granted rather than being ever mindful of the vital role Motherhood plays in the world. If man would withdraw himself from the activities of this world of illusion and go into the secrecy of his own closet and there, in silence, meditate upon this all-important TRUTH—Motherhood—perhaps he would emerge with a greater love, a deeper reverence and devotion and a higher esteem for Motherhood.

Motherhood is the symbol of compassion, forgiveness, unselfishness, patience and long suffering, faith and fortitude.

To revere Motherhood is to worship God. He who holds in his heart the greatest love, the deepest reverence for Motherhood, walks closest to God.

## ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS—A FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

One of the terrible curses of humanity down the ages, alcoholism, has been conquered, for all of its victims who really wish to conquer it, by the work of the remarkable organization known as Alcoholics Anonymous. This fellowship, now 25 years old, numbers more than a quarter of a million men and women in this country alone. It is growing at the rate of thousands of members each year and is represented in scores of countries outside the United States.

Medical and psychiatric experts, as well as members of the clergy, agree that before AA their efforts in combating alcoholism were negligible. It is estimated that 50% of those who join AA never drink again, no matter how long and compulsive their drinking had been, and another 25%, after one or more "slips" back into drinking, eventually attain a state of happy and constructive sobriety.

Here is part of the official definition of this wonderful organization:

*Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.*

One of the crucial discoveries AA has made is that alcoholism is an illness—progressive, insidious, and fatal; that almost nobody who has once contracted it is able any longer to exercise will power to combat it. The disease of alcoholism, they say, is threefold in nature—physical, mental and spiritual—and the unique therapy of Alcoholics Anonymous, in an intangible but powerfully convincing fashion, heals the victim at all three levels.

Of even greater importance is the revolutionary discovery that to all intents and purposes only another alcoholic, himself sober and fairly integrated, can effectively help the still suffering victim. In the process he helps himself and strengthens his own sobriety as much as he helps the sick individual. This remarkable idea, which seems never to have occurred to anyone before AA came into existence, is at the very heart of the AA therapy.

Thus the alcoholic, almost always an egoistic, defiant, unethical individual before he turns to AA for help, is placed in the position of either helping other alcoholics or jeopardizing his own sobriety. He must give of what

he has received, or what he has will be taken from him. He must cultivate and practice a love of his neighbor or, sooner or later, will be plunged back himself into the nightmare of alcoholism.

The other pillar of AA therapy is that its members, who are often unbelievers when they first come to an AA meeting, gradually learn to turn to God for help and strength and by a regular habit of prayer and meditation eventually discover in themselves a core of serenity and love, of which these people, perhaps more than any other single group previously, were in ignorance. Members freely assert that AA is fundamentally a spiritual program, that a prayer for help in maintaining their sobriety, made each morning, and a prayer of gratitude made each night, are basic to the AA way of life.

Here are the "Twelve Suggested Steps" of recovery which constitute the program of Alcoholics Anonymous, a true fellowship in prayer which those of us who are not alcoholics can only admire and, perhaps, envy as well:

1. *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.*
2. *Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*
3. *Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.*
4. *Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.*
5. *Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*
6. *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.*
7. *Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*
8. *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*
9. *Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*
10. *Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*
11. *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*
12. *Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

« « » »

*Book Review*

JOURNEY INTO CONSCIOUSNESS, by Dawn Edwards; Philosophical Forum, 838 N. Mansfield Ave., Los Angeles 38, Calif.; 245 pp. 1955; $5.00.

Dawn Edwards has behind her a long career of study and teaching in the fields of psychology, philosophy and comparative religions; at present she is a religious instructor at the Spiritual Development Foundation in Hollywood. Her background and experience well qualify her for writing a book whose theme is summed up in its superb title, JOURNEY INTO CONSCIOUSNESS, the journey that every one of us is called upon to make.

One's enjoyment of this extraordinary book is marred by the many distractions in the style — a complex, intense, over-abundant style, often needlessly archaic and highly subjective; one that too frequently obtrudes upon the reader and makes him overly conscious of the author. But the tremendous seriousness and surging vitality of the book, its essential nobility and depth of perception, unquestionably recommend it to anyone brave enough to venture into the disturbing but inescapable terrain of the spiritual life that is its subject matter.

JOURNEY INTO CONSCIOUSNESS has many levels of meaning and instruction, but what emerges graphically is its reminder of the fateful duality of man's being: the animal and the god in a single personality; an earth-bound creature of egoism and sensuality, and a living soul whose nature is divine. The struggle between these two opposing worlds within the heart of every man, and the resolution of their conflict, are the theme of Miss Edwards' book.

"Those who persist in love and morality in the face of tribulation," she writes, "are the salt of the earth, literally...To continue to go the way of good and life, or to return to the way, when one sees the corrupted rewarded by the world, while contempt and failure perhaps continue to dog the good—is this not the Self's way of having us choose its intention for its own sake?... One will simply not find the way to consciousness except for its own sake only. Heaven and hell are not within without a purpose. Light must be won *through* darkness; meekness *through* resistance..."

For Miss Edwards, evil is another name for doubt, ignorance and egoism. The core of her book is her argument that

evil is within us, not without, and is useful and necessary in the journey into consciousness, the road that leads to the realization of the nature of Truth. Resistances, tensions, obstacles of all kinds meet us continually along the way but, she says, they are inevitable and good and should be embraced as the means necessary for our self-unfoldment.

"By action and reaction, or prods, life gains more life and advances. Each new tension demands the creative act toward completion of that circle—toward liberation."

"Without opposing itself, truth cannot have consciousness of itself...Only by the I-am-different-from-that (attitude), can there be any comparison, any consciousness. Knowledge, consciousness, understanding, is therefore only possible by way of unconsciousness, of ignorance...

"We gain health by developing a resistance against germs. Except for germs, we would not have to strengthen the life forces. Life grows strong by overcoming the resistance to it!" "Pain is part of the learning process, and the means whereby we can awaken."

Ideally JOURNEY INTO CONSCIOUSNESS is a book to be read during crises in one's life, or rather just after a crisis has begun to dissolve and one moves forward again on a new current of energy, hope and understanding. At such times it would be a fascination from beginning to end, a veritable manual of the geography of spiritual struggle.

Sixty-eight pages are devoted to what she calls the 'life and death traits' that war unceasingly in the breast of man. But at the end she strikes a note of victory and glorious consummation. We believe her when she says:

"We can know, be, and are, the unseparate Self; the Self that reflects the cosmos; and knowing that, who can we not know, and love, and serve? All walk o'er the bridge of the Self to the Ultimate. Why not this very life?

"Within us sleep thousands of unborn suns; illimitable vistas that open up to such majesty...and awesome sweetness and beauty beyond all possible limits of imagination or reason, that no words have ever been invented to describe them."

In these thrilling passages Dawn Edwards convinces us that the spiritual life, with all its perils and exaltations, is the only life there is, and that she herself is one of the 'fighters for life' that she hails so eloquently throughout her book. """"

*Book Review*

ON RELIGION: SPEECHES TO ITS CULTURED DESPISERS, by Friedrich Schleiermacher; Harper Torchbook No. 36; Harpers, N.Y.; 287 pp.; $1.60.

In 1799 Friedrich Schleiermacher, an obscure chaplain attached to a Berlin hospital, published a book with the provocative title, *On Religion: Speeches To Its Cultured Despisers*, which soon made him famous in Germany and helped to establish him later as a major figure in Protestant theology and religious philosophy of the 19th Century.

This book was an attack upon the materialism of an era that had consigned true religion to near oblivion. It was an attempt to restore religion to its esteemed position in the life of enlightened humanity, to demonstrate how abortive all of man's endeavors were without the leaven and insight of religion, and to convince the cultured classes of Germany that in denigrating religious thought and experience they were robbing their lives of something more exciting than anything their other pursuits could provide.

Religion, says Schleiermacher, is a matter of intuition, not of doctrine; of immediate experience of the Divine, not of belief in a system of religious thought. Even the importance of scriptures are reduced in comparison to genuine religious emotion or apprehension of the 'World-Spirit' .... These and similar pronouncements captivated an age weary with intellect and rationalism, just as they have gained an ascendancy among cultured and uncommitted people in our own time.

The following page of excerpts from this historic book suggests the quality of Schleiermacher's classic style, which is all the more impressive when one reflects that he was only 31 when it was published. The book also contains a series of detailed 'explanations' which the author, when fame had made him perhaps too self-conscious, appended to later editions, which are interesting as a commentary on how a man modifies his viewpoints with time and not always for the better.

We commend this book to ministers and students of religious thought, and to writers on religious subjects who are concerned about the state to which high religion has fallen in many circles in our day, we offer it as a sample of how the 'cultured despisers' of the 20th Century might be confronted.

*From Schleiermacher's ON RELIGION: SPEECHES TO ITS CULTURED DESPISERS*

"If you have only given attention to these dogmas and opinions, you do not yet know religion itself, and what you despise is not it. Why have you not penetrated deeper to find the kernel of this shell?... I ask therefore that you turn from everything usually reckoned religion, and fix your regard on the inward emotions and dispositions, as all utterances and acts of inspired men direct...

"Religion is infinite, not merely because any single religious organization has a limited horizon...but more particularly because everyone is a person by himself and is only to be moved in his own way, so that for everyone the elements of religion have most characteristic differences...

"True religion does not desire to bring those who believe and feel to one belief and one feeling. Its endeavor is to open in those who are not yet capable of religious emotion the sense for the unity of the original source of life...

"Not every person has religion who believes in a sacred writing, but only the man who has a lively and immediate understanding of it, and who therefore, so far as he himself is concerned, could most easily do without it...Is not the man who perceives existence both as one and as all, who stands over against the Whole, and yet is one with it in feeling, to be accounted happier in his religion, let his feeling mirror itself in idea as it may?...

"The true nature of religion is immediate consciousness of the Deity as He is found in ourselves and in the world. Similarly the goal and the character of the religious life is not the immortality desired and believed in by many. It is the immortality which we can now have in this temporal life. In the midst of finitude to be one with the Infinite and in every moment to be eternal is the immortality of religion...

"Even in the common relations of life nothing may be lost of the expression of a pious mind. The holy ardour with which they treat everything shows that even in trifles that a profane spirit skims over thoughtlessly, the music of noble feelings resounds in them. The majestic calm with which they equalize small and great, shows that they refer everything to the Unchangeable and in all things alike perceive the Deity..."

* * *

## NOTICES and COMMENTS

*FIP IN LIBRARIES.* In April, after a long and active career, Harry Miller Lydenberg, an old friend of Fellowship in Prayer, passed away at the age of 85. Dr. Lydenberg was responsible for placing our publication in the New York Public Library, of which he had formerly been director. We wonder if our readers would make inquiries about the possibility of having FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER sent regularly to the library in their local community. This is a sound and logical approach to expanding our work, but to carry it out we shall naturally have to depend on the efforts of our readers. Please let us know what your findings are in this promising direction.

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*INDIA'S GREAT SCRIPTURE.* The oldest and one of the most profound scriptures of the world's living religions are the Upanishads of India. From them have come the basic religious orientation of all Hindus and the inspiration of all the subsequent sacred texts of India, including the Bhagavad Gita. The Vedanta philosophy, which has attracted and influenced so many people in the modern era, is a distillation of the central truths of the Upanishads. It has been said that a reading of these great works will permanently affect one's view of the world and of one's relation to the Supreme Lord of the universe. The philosopher Schopenhauer stated that the first translation of the Upanishads into a western tongue was 'the most important event of the 19th Century.' The two pages of the centerfold in this issue will give the reader a taste of their beauty and profundity and, we trust, will inspire him to read further in this ancient and ever-living scripture.

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*CONTRIBUTORS.* Two writers appear in this issue for the first time, Mr. Mark Halpern and Mr. Francis Merchant. To both we extend a cordial welcome... Mr. Halpern is represented by 'The True Philosopher' on page 10. This short but concentrated essay makes a vital distinction between the scholar and the religious man, between the man of letters, however learned, and the man who is a 'philosopher' in the truest sense: 'the serene embodiment of divine wisdom'... 'Destiny and Suffering,' on page 16, consists of excerpts taken from Mr. Merchant's important recent book, THE GOLDEN HOARD, published in 1959 by Texas Southern University at Houston, Texas.

We hope to review this challenging work in our next issue. Mr. Merchant is also the editor of an interesting booklet published four times a year for $1.00, which we can recommend to our readers. It is called The Common Good and is published at 2441 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans 22, La.... Henry T. Hamblin's article on 'Turning to the Lord' is taken from a very worthwhile publication, MIRA, published at 10 Connaught Road, Poona 1, India. The work they are doing is very similar to our own and we hope that some of our readers will contact them. Two of their recent issues have contained reprinted articles by FIP writers.

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*ANNIVERSARY AT CHRISTMAS.* Fellowship in Prayer is ten years old this month, but as a result of letters received and a staff consultation it has been decided to print the Tenth Anniversary number in December. This will give us more time to effectively distribute this special number, of which a minimum of 5,000 copies will be printed. Further, it is hoped that a December printing of that issue will lead many of our readers to send Christmas gift subscriptions to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER and to order extra copies for distribution to interested friends. The heart of the Anniversary number will be some 30 pages of prize articles, poems, and prayers that have appeared in our pages during the decade 1950-60. We have already made a tentative selection but special choices from readers will be welcome and an attempt will be made to incorporate them in our present list. Also, we invite suggestions as to how the December number can best be circulated to achieve a maximum of effectiveness...It is our plan, incidentally, to have that number printed rather than Vari-typed, as usual, and this should enhance the attractiveness of the publication for new readers particularly.

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*BOOK REVIEWS.* As we have mentioned before, we invite manuscripts on all religious subjects and also reviews of books which may be felt to be of particular interest to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER readers. These reviews of course will be signed by the author and when they appear unsigned it should be understood that they represent the opinions of the editor.

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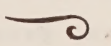

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## PRAYER OF A WRITER

Lord of all things,

Whose gifts to man include the shining symbols
known as words,

Grant that I may use their mighty power
only for good.

Help me to pass on small fragments of Thy
wisdom, truth and love.

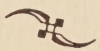
Teach me to touch the unseen, lonely heart
with laughter, or the quick release
of tears.

Let me portray the courage that exists defiant
in the face of pain or death;
the kindness and the gentleness of those
who fight against the anger of the world;
the beauty hidden in the smallest things,
the mystery, the wonder of it all...

Unstop my ears, unblind my eyes,
unlock my heart.

Speak through me, Lord, if it be Thy will.

— Author Unknown



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